

Appl. No.: 09/899,645

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 5 has been amended to correct an inadvertent typographical error that was introduced into this claim in the Amendment filed on January 21, 2004. In particular, subpart (e) has been amended to add the word --the-- immediately before the first appearance of "nucleotide sequence" in subpart (e). This amendment to claim 5 is purely formal in nature and does not represent new matter.

In the Amendment filed on January 21, 2004, claim 5 was inadvertently amended to delete the word "the" described above by using the strikethrough method, when Applicants intended instead to add this word to the claim. Applicants intended to underline the word "the" to represent the addition of this word to the claim but instead inadvertently used strikethrough.

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-14, 17, 21, 22, and 24-30 are pending.

Reexamination and reconsideration of the application as amended are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is solicited.

If in the opinion of the Examiner a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

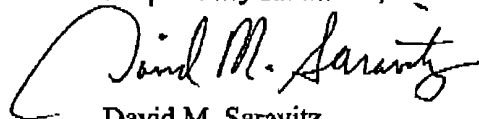
It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required

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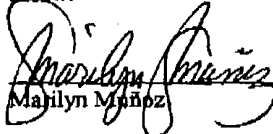
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therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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Customer No. 29122 ALSTON & BIRD LLP Bank of America Plaza 101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000 Charlotte, NC 28280-4000 Tel Raleigh Office (919) 862-2200 Fax Raleigh Office (919) 862-2260	CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the US Patent and Trademark Office, Attn. Section TC 1600, at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on the date shown below.  Marilyn Muñoz 02/20/04 Date
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